Date: March 8, 2018  
Time: 3:00p.m.  
Location: TPD LEC, 320 S. Kansas Ave., Classroom A

Attendance
Committee Members Present: Tony Emerson, Aaron Mays, Michael Lesser  
City Staff Present: Nickie Lee, Finance Director & Mary Feighny, Deputy City Attorney.

1) Call to Order  
Meeting was called to order by Councilmember Emerson.

2) Elect Committee Chair  
Councilmember Lesser made a motion to nominate Councilmember Emerson as the committee chair. Councilmember Mays seconded the motion. Councilmember Emerson accepted the nomination. Motion passed 3:0.

3) Approval of Minutes  
None of the 2018 committee members were on the TGT Committee in 2017, however the Legal Department stated that minutes from the August 10, 2017 meeting could be approved by unanimous consent. Councilmember Lesser made a motion to approve the minutes by unanimous consent. Councilmember Mays seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by the committee by unanimous consent.

4) Overview of TGT Fund Structure/Begin Discussions for 2019 Budget  
Nickie Lee provided the committee with a presentation which gave committee members an overview of the City of Topeka’s Transient Guest Tax.

The City of Topeka has a 7% TGT structure which allocates 7% of the City’s annual budget to these services. Within that percentage, 5% is considered the base which supports a broad scope of projects. The Committee chooses the organizations which they deem to be the best fit to receive this percent. The organizations that have been allocated with funds from the TGT Base act as administrators of the funds who are able to use the broad scope within the definition provided to put the money toward projects they feel are a best fit. Projects that are
eligible to receive these funds include: conventions/tourism, City facilities connected with conventions/tourism, defrays the cost of providing operational services for convention/tourism functions, creates innovative projects and activities, and promotes general economic welfare of the City and its environs which includes attracting industry. In the 2018 budget, $1,595,830 was allocated to Visit Topeka, $222,205 was allocated to the Visit Topeka BID Fund, and $202,004 was allocated to the Topeka Zoo.

There are an additional 2% budgeted for special projects. The first percent has been allocated to Sunflower Soccer Association (SSA). Representatives from the organization will provide more detail and answer committee member questions in the following agenda item. The Sunflower Soccer project was adopted by the TGT Committee in 2012 with a twenty year funding cycle to end in 2032. The City had planned to fund this project for twenty years, however some of it has been able to be paid down in cash which brought the necessary funding time down to fifteen years. This allows for more cash opportunity within the money to be used toward Sunflower Soccer. The two projects that have been completed thus far with the funds were an extension to the sanitary sewer to SSA. This extension then allowed for the second portion of the project to be completed which was to build multifunction restrooms, concession stand, pro shop, administrative office, and storage. Additionally, road improvements were completed to include a larger parking lot, landscaping, signage, shade and additional soccer fields. The first part of this project was paid in cash. The second project was bonded in the Fall of 2015. In 2018, the full amount of $379,986 was estimated into the budget to be spent toward SSA and is designated toward that special project. Last year, not all of those funds were spent which provides more money within the next year to put toward that project. The direction of expending these funds in the future is something the 2018 TGT Committee will be reviewing.

The other 1% of TGT allocated funds was designated as “Special Projects”. This percentage used to be used for historical purposes with a portion going toward historic grant fund that the City administered and a portion was for the Riverfront Park. That expired in 2015 and the committee and Council decided to extend that. In 2015, a call went out for historic projects. The four projects that were decided on were the Downtown Plaza, Jayhawk Theatre, Constitution Hall, and the Evel Kinevel Museum. Each project is being cashed financed. Each quarter, as revenue is received from this one percent, quarterly reports are provided and questions from the committee, Governing Body and City are asked and monies are doled out as they are received until the projects either meet the cap or until December
31, 2027. It is estimated that for 2018, $379,986 will go toward those projects.

The next step is for the current committee members to review and make a recommendation for the 2019 TGT budget to the Governing Body before the budget process which begins in April or May each year. Staff will provide a final version of 2018 projects, and the committee will decide whether to approve these proposals. The preliminary 2019 budget has been modeled on the adopted 2018 budget.

Councilmember Emerson inquired about the two 1% allocations and for clarification about the 5% in regard to the committee making any changes. Nickie Lee stated that the one percent for special projects have separate development agreements that the Governing Body approved in 2015/2016 which are very specific and would require approval by the Governing Body to change those agreements. This action occurred in 2017 with the Jayhawk Theatre and in that instance, it was due to a change in the project plan. With Sunflower Soccer, it is known that the funds will be used by SSA, however the details of that funding will need to be examined for action. The previous projects were very specific in lining out those resolutions. The 5% is where the committee will have the most discretion when deciding on where to give the money. Past practice by the TGT Committee has been to allocate these funds to tourist organizations which are able to best spread those funds around the city.

Councilmember Emerson voiced support for continued funding to Visit Topeka and the Zoo.

5) Update from Sunflower Soccer

Andrew Fletcher, Executive Director at Sunflower Soccer Association introduced himself to the committee. He noted that the view of youth soccer has changed immensely within the United States since 2012. SSA currently has about 1,450 recreational players. One change noted was that competitive youth soccer began to grow and that the number of tournaments that clubs would put on as they are revenue generators. The second major change that SSA has noticed along with these shifts within other local clubs, was the effect on numbers of teams and players coming to Topeka after the completion of the Overland Park Soccer Complex. Mr. Fletcher was hired by the Association in May of 2017 to aid in growing the programs, brand, and structure of SSA.

One of the changes made was to open the complex up during the week for practice. By doing this, staff noticed a significant growth of usage and participation by not only around 300 players using fields for practice, but also parents walking the parking lot for exercise and
siblings playing on the fields while they wait. In June of 2018, SSA will introduce a new program called Topeka Soccer Club. This will be a competitive branch of SSA, with the goal being new competitive leagues being based out of SSA and Topeka and associated with the organization.

A second addition to programming in 2017 was a new recreational league for 3 year old children. The first season of this program saw 250 children participate. So far within these first few months of Mr. Fletcher’s employment, growth in programs and overall Association has been easy to see.

Mr. Fletcher spoke to the Committee about budgetary concerns and possible changes to the original funding proposal. One noted item is the replacement of old soccer goals. These goals are welded cast iron and are incredibly heavy. They are also yellowing which causes an eyesore. To replace goals with modern ones, it will cost around $40,000-$50,000 with an idea to replace goals a few at a time. Mr. Fletcher has asked the committee for permission to spend remaining TGT funding to improve on some of these other areas. A long-range objective would be to see growth in numbers for recreational, competitive, and tournament play.

During the 2017 Sunflower State Games, SSA opened the complex up to a variety of other sport competitions and would like to continue growing that partnership.

Mr. Fletcher provided Committee members with a copy of a new proposal for Sunflower Soccer Association. Kevin Beck, SSA Board President spoke to Committee members to provide some background and to answer any questions. Mr. Beck added that a showcase tournament will be held at SSA this spring which will bring in private schools to compete against each other as well as to bring in new

Councilmember Emerson inquired if the intention of SSA was to ask for an adjustment to the original boundary to the TGT agreement. Mr. Beck confirmed this as true.

Councilmember Lesser inquired as to where the 1% revenue of the soccer came from. Nickie Lee answered that the funds were from the 1% that the local hotels collect that then is provided to SSA. Councilmember Lesser noted that he would like to see a copy of the organization’s financial statement to discuss at length at a future meeting.

Mr. Fletcher concluded with a statement to committee members that in order to enhance Topeka’s soccer experience, changes would need
to be made to the original resolution so that improvements could be made at SSA which would bring in more players and families and overall enhance the full soccer experience.

Councilmember Lesser inquired as to what items were listed in the original resolution. Nickie Lee noted she would provide that information to the committee members for them to review. Mary Feighny noted that the original projects that were included in the resolution were for sanitary sewer, multi-function facility that included restrooms, concessions, office, storage, as well as the improvement of internal roads and parking lot, signage, landscaping, and addition of five soccer fields. If SSA would like to go outside of that original scope, it will require recommendation from the Committee and approval by the Governing Body. Councilmember Lesser inquired if there any capital expenditures that might qualify for spending some of the money for projects that SSA is asking for. Mr. Fletcher answered that in the standard operating budget, the funds are not there for those larger projects. He noted that SSA did receive a grant and that those monies were used to purchase small goals. Sunflower Soccer has also been purchasing a couple of large goals a few at a time as they are so expensive, however operating that way will take a long time to accomplish that objective. Sunflower Soccer Association does participate in the annual Community Foundation’s Day of Giving.

Kurt Young, Executive Director with the Topeka Lodging Association spoke to Committee members and provided some historical perspective to the decisions behind the Lodging Association choosing SSA to receive a 1% fund. Topeka Lodging Association chose to provide 1% to SSA and 1% to organizations listed in the Special Projects area were initiatives that Topeka Lodging Association felt would serve to grow income for the industry with bringing in new patrons and visitors.

There were no other questions from Committee members.

6) Other Items Before the Committee
Councilmember Emerson noted that Councilmember Karen Hiller was in attendance at the meeting as she had served as a TGT committee member in previous years and inquired if she had anything to share with the current committee members.

Councilmember Hiller addressed the committee and noted that in the minutes from the August 10, 2017 minutes, she had introduced having a presentation given about the prospects of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in specific regard to the Sumner and Monroe schools and their nomination to be
listed with UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. These schools had early ties to the Civil Rights movement. Councilmember Emerson inquired if this item might be something to put on a future agenda for the TGT Committee. Councilmember Hiller noted that she would be appreciative if the committee would like to do so.

7) **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned.

The video of this meeting can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2zEiUtxxeo&list=PLgeHEUuxN1FoZdB7js9gi-GuydmlHROCY